

ANARCHY ON THE AIRWAVES PART II

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BY Scott Wild

(Note: This is a continuation of Anarchy on the Airways, which appeared on P. 40 of issue #42.)

In my last article, I talked about unlicensed, underground Pirate radio stations, who runs them and why, where they operate, and how you can hear them. After Flipside #42 hit the streets, I was surprised at the number of people who wrote letters, sent me information on other Pirate stations, and especially the hundereds of letters a group called A*C*E* received from Flipside readers after I mentioned their organization. Most of the letters said the same thing, which was basically, "Scott, you asshole! You told us everything we wanted to know about pirate stations EXCEPT how to put one on the air!" It seems that many of you have become fed up with the narrow mindedness of the corporate "Michael Jackson" top 40 stations/ You think that you could do better than that and provide an alternative music outlet for your communities, don't you? I applaud your spirit! However, it simply isn't enough to run out and put a radio station on the air (at least one that will sound good) without knowing what you are doing. I also have to warn you that operating an unlicensed radio station can be dangerous; you can go to prison for one year, and receive a \$10,000.00 fine for EACH time you go on the air. The FCC (Federal

Communications Commission) has so far never sent anyone to jail for running a pirate radio station, and typical penalties these days for first time offenders has been a monetary fine in the area of \$500 to \$1000. Radio Free Insanity, a shortwave pirate station in Indianapolis, was recently fined \$1000.00 after the FCC tracked them down. Their fine was later reduced to \$500. Operating a pirate station is a great way to thumb your nose at Authority, but believe me-it's not a game. And because their are issues of legal liability involved, I can't simple tell you now to put a pirate station on the air. But, since so many people do break the law in this manner, I suppose I can tell you how OTHER people have in the past put unlicensed radio stations on the air. After all, this is publicly available information, and the public does have "the right to know!" So listen close!

HOW THEY DO IT

Most pirate operators try to learn as much as possible about running a pirate station after they have decided to go ahead with the project. This involves going to the local library and checking out every book listed under "Broadcasting" that can tell them something about what they are going to do. Yes folks, they have to do their homework. Many pirates will often contact someone with

a little experience (a disgruntled DJ, TV repairman, electrical engineering student, etc) who may be able to lend a hand with the technical aspects of broadcasting, like antenna construction, wiring a soundboard, microphone and turntable to a transmitter, etc. Someone needs to know what the hell is going on! The most essential piece of equipment a pirate needs is his transmitter. Without it...there is no station! Obtaining a trasmitter can be an expensive and confusing problem, but it doesn't have to be. The first thing that has to be decided before a transmitter is purchased is on what frequencies it should operate.



SHORTWAVE

Shortwave pirates can often be heard around the country, and sometimes the world. The big problem with this kind of pirate is the lack of a defined audience: when you're blanketing the country with your single, who is listening? Other punks in New York, or a tribe of Aboriginies in Indonesia, (or vice versa). On shortwave frequencies, people will need special receivers to pick up the signal. Shortwave also requires some technical knowlege since transmitters will require modification. The big plus of shortwave transmitters is that they can often be purchased for a semi-reasonable price, often for under \$100.00. Pirates will check the classified ads in the back of Ham radio magazines like "QST" and "CQ". These magazines can be found in thousands of public libraries and 7-11's around the country. However, if you live in Tuttle, ND and just cannot find these magazines anywhere, then write to "Ham Trader" POB

Z-EEC COMMUNICATIONS STATIONS

KEXJ
FM 105.9

The Best
in the
West...

KMTL

AM 750

KFRO
SW RADIO

FREE RADIO OREGON: BOX 5074, HILO, HI. 96720

We CONFIRM THAT: DARREN LENO RECEIVED
THE TRANSMISSIONS OF: _____ ON A FREQUENCY OF: _____
AT: _____ EFFECTIVE RADIATED POWER OF: _____
WATTS. KEEP LOOKING FOR OUR WEEKEND & HOLIDAY BROADCASTS, AND
THANK YOU FOR LISTENING IN ON THE SOUNDS OF FREE RADIO OREGON.
73'S OPERATOR: Ed Adams

356, Wheaton, IL 60189 and ask for a sample newsletter. Ham Trader lists hundreds of used shortwave transmitters that are for Sale, many at an affordable price. Popular pirating radios include the Heathkit (or Heath) DX 60 and DX 100 series, EF Johnson Viking series, Hatticrafters and Hammarlund transmitters.

AM AND FM BANDS

Operating in the AM or FM broadcast bands provides local coverage, and has the potential for reaching a large audience. These kinds of stations often involve many volunteers, and sometime receive alot of community support and participation.

I know of a pirate in a small Michigan town who sets up his little 5 watt FM radio station every weekend, puts on a 2 hour cassette of his favorite music, and goes out with his friends to party and listen to his station. He says that other people regularly tune in, and that no one in his town has complained to the FCC about his station because the kids like it, and it's the only station in town. Besides, he's a 150 miles away from the nearest FCC office- that helps. Many AM & FM pirates use small, easy-to-operate, preassembled transmitters that can be bought for under \$200.00. Here are some places that manufacture such radios. LPB INC., 28 Bacton Hill Road, Frazer PA 19355. PANAXIS PRODUCTIONS, Dept. ACE, POB 130, Paradise CA 95969., STELLATRON, 4942 Whitsett Ave., Suite 205, N. Hollywood, CA 91607.

In order to familiarize themselves with the different kinds of "hobby" broadcasting equipment available today, some pirates will contact a group called HARK, which is dedicated to publicizing "neighborhood broadcasting." For more information send 4 mint first class stamps, or 75¢, to Arnold Timm at HARK, Dept. ACE, 2308 Garfield Ave., #304 Minneapolis, MN 55405. Ask for a sample nesletter.

RADIO
CONFUSION

ANTENNAS

The most important part of a pirate station is the antenna. A pirate may have the strongest transmitter in the world, but without a good antenna, nobody is going to hear it! This area is going to require some research on your part. Pirates CANNOT simply stick a coathanger in the back of a radio and expect results. This is particularly true on shortwave and AM frequencies. A good, effective low cost Dipole antenna can be built like this:

1. A pirate desires what frequency to operate on (I'll say 7425 khz, a popular shortwave pirate frequency.) This is important, because different frequencies require different length antennas.
2. Next, a pirate executes this simple program to determine a Dipole antenna's length: 468 divided by the frequency in megahertz (7425 khz is the same as 7.425 MHz.) Using our example we should get 63.03 feet.
3. A pirate goes to Radio Shack and buys about 50 feet of RG-58 coax cable, 3 plastic insulators, and about 65 feet of 16 gauge wire.
4. The pirate now takes the wire and cuts two 32 foot lengths, and wraps one end of both lengths of wire around a plastic insulator. Then

the un-insulated ends of wire are both wrapped around the third insulator. The two wires must not touch, or they will short out when the transmitter is turned on. After the wire is wrapped around the insulators, each length of wire should be 31 feet, six inches long.

5. The pirate now takes the RG-58 cable, cuts off about three inches of the plastic covering and separates the braided wire from the solid, center wire.

6. The braided wire is now attached to the left side of the center insulator, and the solid wire goes to the right (or vice versa). This is how a simple Dipole antenna is made, and is also effective for receiving as well as transmitting. For more information on how to make this and other antennas, go to that wonderfully usefull place called the public library, and check out the "ARRL Antenna Handbook." If you don't see it ask for it!! The dipole antenna will not work well on the FM band, and will be extremely long on the AM band. If a "hoppy" broadcasting unit is purchased from Panaxis, Stellatron, or any other manufacturer, a pirate should be sure to ask what kind of antenna to use for best results. Just remember; the lower the frequency, the longer the antenna. Hell, the US Navy is building antennas 50 miles long so they can operate on frequencies that are below the human hearing range to talk to their subs during a nuclear attack, but thats another article.

STAYING ALIVE

After a pirate has set up his or her station, precautions should be taken to avoid being located and closed down by the FCC. The Crystal Ship, a famous shortwave pirate, uses the ol' "musical chairs" technique. The transmitter is moved to different locations periodically to foil direction finding attempts. Radio Clandestine, another shortwave pirate, uses the "Hit and Run" tactic: broadcasts are sporadic, at different times and on different frequencies. Transmissions are usually less than an hour long.. I feel that the best way for a pirate to reduce the chances of being "busted" by the FCC is to keep trasmissions short, clean sounding (no electricalsnaps, crackles, or pops on your carrier), and try to stay away from language that the mainstream will find offensive. No, I'm not saying that pirates should be deprived or their right to Freedom of Speech or expression, but they should try to find another way to attracted the wrong kind of attention from

the wrong kind of people. A pirate should also be very careful not to choose a frequency that may cause interference to other, more legal stations. He or she should also be careful NOT to cause interference to the neighbors TV set. The FCC responds quickly and vigorously to these kind of complaints. And for Pete's sake, STAY AWAY from the very top of the FM broadcast band!! Especially if you live within a 'hunded miles of an airport. For some awful reason, thats where "VHF Omnidirection Range" (VDR) transmitters operate. They have everything to do with airplanes navigation and guidance. If you interfere with these stations, you can kiss your diodes goodbye. Not only will you have the FCC frantically searching for you, but you'll have to deal with the FBI and FAA, too.

STAYING IN TOUCH

If you, or any pirate you know, would like to keep on top of other pirate activity in this country and around the world, you should join A*C*E.

the Assoc. of Clandestine radio Enthusiast. Send a business-size stamped addressed envelope, or \$1.00 for a sample of their monthly newsletter to A*C*E, POB 452, Moorhead, MN 56560. Their Minneapolis POB mentioned last article, is still open, but this is now their permanent address. A booklet has been written by Radio Anarchist, and my good friend, Rick Movement in this country, and is full of helpful pirating hints. The Free Radio Handbook is available for \$2.00 cash, to BTYW, POB 5074, Hilo, HI 96720. Well, thats all for this month folks. I hope you've got a clear understanding on how those dastardly pirated set themselves up in business. Once again, I can't stress enough that I don't encourage anyone to break the law (officially). If you would like to see more articles on underground radio stations appear in Flipside, please write me in care of this magazine. I'm also interested in hearing from those of you with any previous knowlege or experience in the Pirate radio scene. Have fun and be careful.

RADIO SOUND WAVE

OSL #1



OSL #1

Little Anarchy Moon
73'S ARTIE / FFFK 11

formerly known as LOUD FAST RULES

SOUL ASYLUM

RELEASES

SAY WHAT YOU WILL

Produced by BOB MOULD on TWIN TONE records

445 Oliver Ave So.
Mpls. Minn
55405